A CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT - LYNDON B. JOHNSON (12-19-1967)

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From December 19th, CBS NEWS Dan Rather, NBC NEWS Ray Scheer and ABC NEWS Frank Reynolds interview President Lyndon B. Johnson at the White House

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sure mr president i think any american seated in this chair tonight would want to ask you about peace do you have any fresh new ideas about getting peace in vietnam or are we stuck with as i think secretary rusk has put it waiting for some sign from the other side peace is the number one subject in the mind of every leader in the government we're searching for it a part of every day there are four or five specific things that we think uh should be agreed upon we think that the war now going on at the dmz at the 17 parallel should stop we think that infiltration of the laos should stop they have previously agreed to that we think that the people of south vietnam have demonstrated that they want to be governed on the basis of one man one vote and people who are prepared to live under that kind of an arrangement could live under that kind of arrangement

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arrangement and the thing that we must recognize about peace is it's much more than just wishing for it you can't get it just because you want it if that were true we would have had it a long time ago because no people in the world want peace more than the president and the cabinet and the people of the united states but if we are to find the solution of uniting the people of south vietnam and solving the problems in south vietnam it must be done not by some [Music] senator or congressman ron or senator harkey or senator fulbright or some of our best intentioned people who want peace this piece is going to be found by the leadership of south vietnam the people of south vietnam in south vietnam and we are encouraging that and we're going to continue to do our dead level best to see this constitutional government where 70 of their people registered and 60 percent of their people voted uh develop some kind of a plan that we think will ultimately unite south vietnam and bring peace to that area this will take time this will take patience this will take understanding and the great problem we have is not misleading the enemy and letting him think because of some of the statements he hears coming from us that the way is cheap or that it's easy or that we are going to falter mr president there seems to be a growing impression throughout the world that the united states will settle for nothing less than military victory in vietnam what's your view on that i have just explained

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have just explained what i uh thought would be a fair solution uh i will repeat it as briefly and as succinctly as i can the demilitarized zone must be respected as the 54 agreements required the unity of vietnam as a whole must be a matter for peaceful adjustment in negotiation the north vietnamese forces must get out of laos and stop infiltrating laos and that is what the 62 agreement required and it must be respected the overwhelming majority of the people of south vietnam want a one-man one-vote constitutional government about 70 percent of all the citizens who might have voted in south vietnam registered in the election and 60 percent of them voted the 20 or so of the population now under viet cong control must live under a one-man one-vote constitutional system if there's to be peace president chu has said that the south vietnamese government is not prepared to recognize the nlf as a government and it knows well that nlf's control is by

hanoi and so do we but he also has said that he's prepared for informal talks with members of the nlf and these could bring good results i think that's a statesmanlike position and i hope the other side will respond that is why our statement in early december said we believe that the south vietnamese must work out their own future acting through electoral processes of the kind carried forward in the last two years the political future of south vietnam and mr shara must be worked out in south vietnam by the people of south vietnam and it is our judgment that this war could be ended in a matter of weeks if the other side would face these five simple facts and if some of our own people here in

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and if some of our own people here in this country would encourage that that be done instead of broadcasting alarms that may give false signals both to hanoi and the vietcong mr president are we willing to accept communists in a coalition government if the south vietnamese government and the nfl got together to negotiate are we willing to accept communists in a coalition government i think that the thing we must bear in mind that what happens in south vietnam up to the people of south vietnam not to north vietnam not to china soviet to the united states but the people of south vietnam we are prepared to have every man in south vietnam under their constitutional government one man one vote and for those people themselves to determine the kind of government they want we think we know what that determination would be from the seventy percent the registered the sixty percent that have voted and it's a matter for them to determine not for me to determine and uh that i think that we might add one other thing here that uh when mr reynolds says what are the minimum conditions for this or that we don't want to get sparring with each other but i can say that so far as the united states is concerned we're ready to stop fighting tonight if they're ready to stop fighting but we are not ready to stop our side of the war only to encourage them to escalate their side of the war but we will reciprocate and meet any move that they make but we're not going to be so soft-headed and puddin-headed as to say that we'll stop our half of the war and hope and pray that they stop theirs now we have tried that in some instances we've leaned over backwards and every time we have they have escalated

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every time we have they have escalated their efforts and they have killed our soldiers and we've got no result from it and the burnt child read the fire but if you want us to stop our bombing uh you have to ask them to stop their bombing stop their hand grenades stop their mortar at san antonio i laid out the formula and i said we will stop bombing immediately provided you will have prompt and productive discussions now that's about as far as anyone can go and that's as far as anyone should go and that's as far as we're going mr president is it your feeling that you have now made our proposition and the next move is up to them well it's my feeling that our position in the world is very clearly known if it's not i've tried to repeat it enough tonight that the people can understand it mr president what is your assessment of hanoi's attitude at this point in the war do you believe they are counting sir on your defeat next november i think that hanoi uh feels that if they can hold out long enough that they will not win a military victory against general westmoreland they haven't done that they they can't point to one single victory they won from our marines or from our air from our navy from our army they think though that they can repeat what happened to them with the french that if their will is strong and they continue to remain firm that they will develop enough sympathy and understanding in this country and hatred of war in this country that their will will outlast our will now i don't think that's true and i think in due time if our people will understand and recognize what's happening i think they'll help me prove it's not true mr president just to make this abundantly clear what you seem to be saying here tonight is that a peace in vietnam is principally up to the saigon government rather than the united

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saigon government rather than the united states and b that the saigon government can have useful talks with the vietnam without recognizing them yes i have said that i think the war could be stopped in a matter of days if president choose a suggestion that he informally talked with members of the nlf were carried out and if they would agree to what they have already agreed to in the 54 cards in the 62 cards and the other points that i

mentioned there this morning like one man one vote under the present constitutional government and i think that would be a useful starting point and i think the result would be that we could find a way to stop the war mr president i think what bothers some people though is that president two and the south vietnamese government as it's now constituted say that they do not recognize the viet cong they do not recognize the nlf now how are they going to have negotiations with them if they don't recognize them they could have informal talks with them dan i said that the president had made clear that he would not recognize mlf but we have made clear for many many months that we can their views can be heard and we can respond to them their recommendations can be received and we can react to them and president chu himself in a very statesmanlike manner has said that he would be agreeable to having informal talks with their representatives and we would hope that out of that some understanding could be reached and i believe if it could be reached the war could be brought to a close mr president much has been made of your 1964 campaign statement about not sending american boys to fight in an asian war as you look back on that now was that a a pledge a hope or was it simply a statement of principle in a larger context well it was one of many

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context well it was one of many statements if you look back upon it as a part of a a policy namely our policy then and now i was to keep our hand out for negotiations and for our discussions and for peace and our guard up that would support the south vietnamese to keep them from being enveloped and we made clear all through that campaign and in the uh this speech which you've extracted one little single sentence out of that uh we felt that the south vietnamese ought to put pledge every resource they had their men their materials all of their resources to defend in themselves and we would never supplant them but we would supplement them to the extent that was necessary that we did not plan to go into asia and to fight an asia war that asians ought to be fighting for themselves but if asians were fighting it for themselves and were using all the resources that they had in south vietnam there was no pledge or no commitment or no implication that we would not uh supplement them and support them as we're doing and as we agreed to do many years before in the sito treaty and as we had agreed to do in the gulf of tonkin resolution before that statement mr president if the scientist has just been a part of the politicians gambit of picking out one sentence before you get to the butt in it and say we are not going to take over all the fighting and do it ourselves we are not going to do what asian boys in south vietnam should do they are doing it they have over seven hundred thousand men there and they're raised out of 17 million population and they're raising another 65 000 compared to the additional 40-odd that we're sending so we we don't plan to supplant them at all but we do plan to supply

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all but we do plan to supply supplement them to whatever is necessary to keep the communist conspiracy from gobbling up that nation mr president if the south vietnamese are as dedicated to to freedom as you say and as many who've been there say why is it that they don't fight as well motivated at least seemingly as the vietcong and the communist north vietnamese put it more bluntly why don't our south vietnamese fight as well as theirs i don't think that all people do everything alike i know some television broadcasters that are better than others and i know some presidents that can perform on a conversation better than others general abrams who is giving leadership to the south vietnamese people think that their army is developing very well now that is not to say that they're equal to the best troops of every other nation but they have made great improvement their their uh working at their job they still have uh some problems to correct in leadership and uh that is what really determines what kind of a fighting force you have but they're getting at it and they're getting results it's mighty easy to blame someone else and that's what we do i don't think we get much out of blaming our allies or talking about how much better we are than they most of the people out there tell us that they believe that the south vietnamese army at this time is equal to the korean troops in 1954 and if they are i don't think we'll have to apologize too much for them they're taking up their positions on the dmz now they've been giving very good results from their actions and general abrams thinks they're doing all right and i would prefer his judgment to anybody's judgment that i know mr president you have always credited the russians with a sincere desire for peace in vietnam do you still hold to that view and if they really want peace why don't they stop supplying the north vietnamese well i uh without going into your statements as

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uh without going into your statements as to my views i would say this that we are not sure just at this point all that motivates the chinese or the russians or any of the other communists who are supporting the north vietnamese i don't think i could honestly uh tell you uh just what their motivations are we have always hoped that uh they would like to see this war uh brought to an end that has been their indication to us now uh whether that would work out in the long run i don't know mr president that brings us back to glassboro and your conversations this summer how much of a factor in the restraint that we and the russians seem to show in the middle east crisis was a product of the dialogue that you established with mr kosigan at glasberg well i think that the glassboro conference was a very useful conference i'm not sure that it really solved any of the problems of the middle east i think the situation in the middle east is a very dangerous one and i think that we have made clear our viewpoint in my statement of june 19th the five conditions that ought to enter into bringing about peace in that area we stress those to mr cassigan at glassboro he understands them he did not agree with them but i think that the soviet union understands that we feel very strongly about this matter that we do have definite views and i think ambassador goldberg at the united nations has made our position very clear and as a result of the action of the

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and as a result of the action of the united nations in sending ambassador yaring there as a mediator we're hopeful that the conditions i outlined in june 19th can be worked out and that a permanent solution can be found to that very difficult problem i would say it's a it's a one of our most dangerous situations and one that's going to require the best tact and judgment and patience and willingness on part of all to find a solution mr president do you consider that this country has the same kind of unwavering commitment to defend israel against invasion as we have in south vietnam we don't have a sito treaty if that is what you're asking we have made clear our very definite interest in israel and our desire to preserve peace in that area of the world or by many means but we do not have a mutual security treaty with them as we do in southeast asia mr president if we might come back for just a moment to the question of our relations with the soviet union it's often said that one of the most tragic consequences of the war in vietnam is the setback in soviet american relations do you agree with that do you think we're making progress in getting along well a good many things said mr reynolds that people have to take with a grain of salt first they ought to look at the sources of these statements i have tried to analyze our position the world with other nations and we do regret that we don't see everything alike with the soviet union or other nations we hoped that there wouldn't be this tension in these strains that frequently in evidence now we don't say that everything is a hundred percent all right because we have very definite and very strong differences of opinion and philosophy but if you're asking me if the tension

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but if you're asking me if the tension that exists today that existed when the berlin wall went up the answer is no now we can understand the soviet union inhibitions and the problems they have as long as vietnam is taking place they're called upon to support their communist brother and they are supporting him in a limited way with some equipment and we wish that were not so we would hope that they would exercise their duties and their responsibilities as co-chairmen and take some leadership to try to bring this war to an end but we we don't think that things are as tense or as serious or as dangerous as they were when the berlin wall went up the cuban missile crisis are following mr kennedy's visit with mr khrushchev at vienna is the president moving now to europe what about the complaint of europe that our preoccupation with vietnam has caused the united states with relations with europe to take a back seat i don't find that complaint in europe i find it in georgetown among few columnists generally uh the european leaders uh we are having very frequent exchanges with them uh generally uh prime minister wilson will be here early in february he's been here several times we've been to germany and mr keisinger and ahead of him mr earhart and ahead of him mr adenauer have been here many of the scandinavian leaders have come here the dutch leaders have come

here this year in europe we have had a very long agenda that has presumed what we think is very excellent results we have just concluded uh agreement on the kennedy round which for which involved very far-reaching trade concessions and uh we think uh will stand as a monument to

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monument to uh the relationship of uh the people of europe and the people of the united states and very much to both of them's advantage uh we had a challenge of nato and uh general de gaulle asked us to get out of france we sat down with the other uh 14 members of nato the other european nations and we looked at our problem and we decided that we would uh go to uh belgium and uh uh 13 of those nations joined the united states and 14 of us went there and naso is now intact and as solid as it can be and unified and secretary rusk has just returned from very successful meetings with him so uh the challenge to nato has been rebuffed the difficulties of kennedy around have been solved the frequent predictions that the germans would reduce their troop strength sixty thousand and we would bring our divisions back from europe those uh matters have been worked out we're working uh feverishly every day trying to bring about a non-proliferation agreement and we are making headway so i think if you take the results of this year's efforts in europe that most european statesmen who have been engaged in those efforts would think we've been quite successful and probably more successful than any other uh a period and i do not see that we have either ignored them or neglected them mr president i wonder if we might turn to matters at home sir the civil rights movement in this country was founded and thrived on the principle of non-violence now all that seems to be changing there are people openly advocating violence and we had violence last summer what is your explanation for these riots sir what happened well i would say that not all of it's changing i would say that all through our history as

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all through our history as these changes occur there has been violence connected with them we found that true world war one we found that true in world war ii we had a strike in detroit we had a ride in detroit during president roosevelt's administration where he had to send out troops that compared very much to the same one we had there this year we have this unrest we have this uncertainty we have this desire of people who have been held down and had all these years to rise up and try to acquire quickly what has been denied them so unjustly so long we have more violence than we want and more than we should have and more than we're going to be able to tolerate but i don't think that represents all of the country at all i think that represents a very small minority i think our big problem is to get at the causes of these rights and i think that some of the causes are the hope of the people themselves they don't have jobs they want jobs so we're going to have to provide jobs and there's some half a million unemployed hardcore unemployed in our principal cities and we just got to go find jobs for them i'm going to call in the businessman of america and say one or two things got to happen you've got to help me go out here and find jobs for these people are we going to have to find jobs at the government for them and hire offer every one of them a job i think that's one thing that could be done and i think that will have to be done as expensive as it is a second i i think that we'll have to do something about the housing situation people live in filth and dilapidated houses and more new housing ought to be built and has to be built and we have to find places to build that housing and i have tried to pass legislation that i thought would be helpful such as the open housing bill i have tried to encourage the congress to take action on model cities and on

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to take action on model cities and on rent supplements and we have made progress although not as much as we'd like so we're going to have to accelerate and step up rebuilding our cities so we can have a decent housing in the field of education education has been denied to the poor on an equal basis many years the poor children haven't had the advantages because of lack of transportation because the economic situation in their family because of a lot of reason their own health condition so they haven't had the education because of discrimination they haven't had the educational opportunities that the other children have had so

we are fastly correcting those we have tripled our education program in three years and the poor have been the primary beneficiaries we are spending three times as much on health today as we were four years ago and the poor are the primary beneficiaries of medicare and medicaid they can have their hospital bills paid now they can have their doctors paid now as a result our infant the mortality rate is going down as a result our death rate's going down we make great progress with health and education they are important things so i would say jobs health and education housing are all contribute to this general dissatisfaction that results in violence on occasions and we've got to accelerate our efforts there and we've got to appeal to these people to keep their feelings within bounds and keep them lawful because every person in this country must obey the law of this country and there's no situation that justifies you're violating the law mr president for those americans especially negroes who live in crowded areas live in poverty with no education no jobs and seemingly no help why not follow an extremist why not revolt well i told you the reasons why because i i see that they

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i i see that they revolting and violence is unlawful and it's not going to be allowed it doesn't solve the problem it's not the answer to the condition that exists the answer is jobs the answer is education the answer is health now if we refuse to give those answers people are going to lose hope and when they do it's pretty difficult to get them to be as reasonable as we think they should but there's every reason why they should not violence is not going to produce more jobs violence is not going to produce more education violating the law and taking the law in your own hands is not going to produce better health or better housing it's going to produce anarchy and that cannot be tolerated well some of these extremists mr president say though that anarchy is exactly what we need that they want to tear down the fabric of this i don't agree with the extremists i hope you don't mr president what is your administration doing now to see that we don't have another ride this summer well i have outlined that jobs housing that's a lot isn't that all of these things trying to get these problems we think that if we can uh have a program for the cities like model cities we think if we can have jobs like neighborhood youth training and the job program we're working out if we can find employment for all the hardcore we think that this will answer some of the causes of the rise mr president in the ghettos i think they say that's just talk white man's talk what's your reaction to that you know what my reaction to it is uh well isn't there this sense of despair this growing estrangement between white what is your answer to it i think well i would hope that uh i i don't know that my answer is necessarily the one sir that we want

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necessarily the one sir that we want what is your answer though frank well my answer is that it is not talk and that uh there will be an attempt made but can it come in time i'm thinking of these young well if not mark what's your solution to that what's what do you recommend what do you think you should do sir if you're not gonna answer now you're not gonna give us your recommendations your thoughts my recommendation is to get going as fast as we possibly can on all the programs that you just mentioned that's what we're doing and we we accept your recommendation and we're going to carry it out mr president if this situation is is as serious as we all think it is uh people say we're spending 30 billion of the year in vietnam why can't we spend 30 billion dollars a year at home if we couldn't get programs that you talk about through this congress how are you going to get them through in the future how we get a sense of urgency about this we we hope that the congress will as these things develop see the need of them we think that we have made progress we couldn't get model cities program authorized and funded two years ago but we did this year we couldn't get to rent supplements authorized and funded but we have this year we couldn't get the housing programs that we have underway now authorized and funded two years ago but we have this year we are making progress we can't correct it overnight you can't take the eras of 100 years and solve them in a hundred days we would like to do as much as we can i'm recommending a good deal more than the congress is willing to do in the poverty field i recommend it and urge and ask every cabinet member to join us in doing so and we urge the congress to provide 2 billion too in funds for poverty they cut it several hundred million we have made the

recommendation for 40 000 uh rent supplement units 40 million dollars they cut it to 10. and i regret it and if i could issue an executive order and initiate it and put my own program into effect i'd do it but uh we we are we're moving that direction and we're going to do all we can to

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and we're going to do all we can to accelerate it and to escalate it mr president uh if i may let's turn to the subject of youth i think everyone expects youth to rebel and to be restless but there seems to be an unusually large number of american youth in this particular point in history who feel alienated to the traditional american ideas of god patriotism and family do you sense this alienation and what have you done about it yes i sense it i think that we we have a we have that condition and we're trying to meet it as best we know how i have seen it several times in my lifetime i remember the days of the zoot suiters and world war ii i remember the doubters that thought all of our youth were going to the dogs because of the sit-down movements and some of the plants in our country at certain periods of our country i remember the doubt expressed about our ability in world war ii to take a bunch of beardless boys and resist the hitler's allegiance and there have been some disappointments but i have visited the campuses of this country my cabinet has gone and met with the young people of this country we deal with young folks every day in the peace corps and in the poverty program and in the vista program and in the job camps and i think it's a very small percentage that have given up that have lost faith that have deep questions about the future of the country and of themselves we have more than three million young people serving in uniform i hear from about a hundred of them every day uh they don't get the attention that you television people give these exhibitionists uh they don't have anyone to make signs

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uh they don't have anyone to make signs for them and parade and get the picture in the paper uh they're just there from daylight to dark fighting for freedom and liberty and willing to die for it and they're a pretty large number comparatively speaking i doubt that there's anything like that many uh hippies or i doubt that they're that many disillusioned people if you added them all up and put them in one unit i think they'd make a very small percentage and i think anyone that thinks the youth of the country is going to the dogs or implies it uh better take another look at it because uh i've just gone through two weddings this year and i've been associated with a lot of young people and the kind of young people that i see and that i hear and that right me are not the uh little group that you all can fare it out up here at some park or some signal that has nothing to do but to carry a sign around on their shoulder and try to obstruct someone else from getting to a place or try to hell them down after they get there i think that we have young people who are terribly upset what's going on i know they hate war we all hate war but i think there's a very small percent that are going to take these extreme means and going to employ these extreme ways to express this uh lack of confidence in the future and in their country mr president how much of an inhibition does it give you to as you go about the country to to have to face these dissenters and demonstrated do you feel you can go where you want to go yes and do and you think that'll be true all through next year yes i think that

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through next year yes i think that there has been a very subtle effort made by a few uh politicians to suggest that it would be difficult for the president to travel it would be very dangerous uh probably the wish was father to the thought i think there's been some indication that certain organized groups would try to bring embarrassment to the secretary of state by not letting him talk or the vice president by interrupting his talk but every time that's happened and it has been encouraged some by some of the political groups because we have we have followed them and seen that that's happened uh the people have been resounding in their disapproval and while we all recognize dissent and we we expect it and we treat it respectfully and we listen to it we don't think that dissent should be turned into hooliganism or we don't think that because a person has a right to dissent that as a great justice one time says that you have a right to holler fire in a crowded theater or that you have a right to tear a speaker's necktie off or to put your hand over his mouth and prevent him

from speaking and we think the dissent should be within the law and within the constitution and we we respect it when it is but if they're going to use storm trooper tactics it will be dealt with and will be dealt with properly and if they're going to encourage folks to bring bodily harm to a president or to any other official that's sinking very low and we don't think that people want to hear much like that either over the television in the form of suggestion or by some who would who are sent to these campuses to incite folks mr president who are these people

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folks mr president who are these people who are encouraging this sort of thing do you see an element of you see them and you see them in every campus on your television every night they are representatives of various groups i don't want to get personal and i don't want to give them advertisement but if you are interested you just turn on abc tonight and look at the newscast and a good part of every newscast you have will have some of these folks that are encouraging the dissent and appealing to them and they'll be parading and they'll have their signs they'll be charging us with murder and this and that because we're trying to carry out our obligations and our treaty commitments and protect that flag would you feel sir go ahead frank you feel sir apparently that the uh the press the television radio the whole works gives a disproportionate share of attention i didn't say that i say that they report it and if you want to see it it's there for you to see i didn't say anything about disproportionate well do you think we do sir well i think it uh that's a matter for your judgment and i don't think it's up to the president to be uh making up your newscast mr president you have said i think mr president that you welcome responsible dissent now for those americans who do strongly dissent from your war policy that want to be responsible yet want to be effective what do you recommend what can they do well at first place i'm not in the business of recommending their program for them i have enough problem with my own program i think but we do have a way of people in this country expressing their viewpoint giving out interviews and making speeches and having picketing and i would say generally speaking mr rather being lawful abiding with the law of the land doing whatever the law will permit them to do i don't think you have to be a law violator in the name of the first amendment i

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in the name of the first amendment i don't think you're justified in being a law violator in order to have your right of free speech i think that the people who ought to want to follow the law and the constitution the most are the dissenters themselves because it's that law and that constitution that gives them their right to dissent and protects that right and i am amazed that some of these so-called liberal folks who reserve for themselves the right to speak long and loud and freely but when the opposition view is expressed to try to drown it out with catcalls or eggs or tomatoes i don't understand that kind of but some of these senators presidents say that the only way they can get your attention is uh to do something unlawful i i i'm not familiar with that who says that well as mr dellinger for one who led the march on the pentagon said that there was no other way to get the attention of the establishment that is the government no i don't think that is correct at all we we read the papers and we see the television and we read our correspondence and we spend a good deal more time that we do out to viewing what he's saying or doing at the pentagon mr president 1968 will soon be upon us i'm wondering as you sit here in your rocking chair whether you could tell us when you sit down to make your decision about running again what are the factors that you're going to weigh i haven't done that to ray i think that in due time i will cross that bridge until then i don't want to speculate about it but not even the factors not to something that respecting until i do that i'm not going to speculate about it mr president uh you often say that the president has plenty of advice uh regardless of when you intend to leave this office and we know you're not going to tell us that

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going to tell us that what advice would you give to the man who does succeed you well i'll do that when i leave it mr president uh i know that uh with a campaign coming up you don't want to get into politics too much but i'd be remiss in my deal is a reporter if i didn't ask you what regardless of who the democratic

candidate is in 1968 what effect do you think the candidacy of senator mccarthy and the position of senator robert kennedy will have on the democratic party i just don't know i don't know what the effect of the kennedy mccarthy movement is having in the country i'm not a reporter i haven't followed it i'm not privileged to all the conversations that may have taken place i just observed they have had some meetings and some discussions i do know of the interest of both of them in the presidency and the ambition of both of them i see that reflected from time to time but just what they're prepared to do and how they're going to do it whether they're going to do it in concert or what will be the effect upon the american people of these maneuverings uh i'm not prepared to say mr president french president de gaulle in light of his picking at nato his attacks on the dollar now even training of russian troops is do you consider him a friend or enemy of this country i believe that the french people have a understanding and interest and affection for the american people and i think it's greatly reciprocated i'm sorry that the relationship between the president and mr de gaulle is not a closer one and that we don't see matters [Music] alike any more often than we do we have tried to do everything that we know to do to minimize the

00:44:03 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUZrUhHy-ro&t=2643s)

to minimize the differences that exist in the leadership of the two governments we strongly feel that the peoples of the two countries have a long history of friendship and we're determined to preserve that and we're also determined to minimize our differences and from my part to do nothing to unjustly or unduly provoke the french government respect mr president to get precisely the point about general the goal as a part of the french people i got precisely the point i don't want to do anything i can to accentuate or aggravate or contribute to emphasizing the differences that we have and straining the relations i think basically our people are friendly and i'm going to do all i can to keep them friendly mr president the other day one of the elder statesmen in our business gave it is his view that unless you regain the trust of the people i think that's the way you put it you could not effectively govern how does that proposition strike you well i think you must have the trust of the people uh i feel that we do have the trust of the people i do think we have the support of the people the people in every election that they've had a chance to express themselves national election have given us a majority vote in 64 the last election we got 61 of the votes the highest percentage any president ever obtained i'm not talking about some individual poll last congressional election we had a majority in both house and senate now we lost some of our majority we lost some of our support i don't think there's any question about that and in a pre-election year you will always

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in a pre-election year you will always do that we looked ahead in 60 ahead of 64 when they were having the san francisco convention i think a great many people uh toyed with the idea of joining or voting in the opposition party until they had the results of the convention until they saw what would happen if you elected a republican and who would be brought into office and the kind of government you'd have and the kind of policies you'd have now i think that there is some uncertainty in the country i think there's some division in the country i don't think that uh the opposition is in the majority and i don't think they will be on election day but i don't discount it and i don't ignore it as you look ahead to the world that your grandson is going to grow up in what kind of a world would you like that to be i would hope that it would be a more knowledgeable world and a better educated world there are four people out of every 10 today who cannot read cat and cannot spell dog cannot recognize the printed word mother i would like to see every boy and girl that's born in the world have all the education that he or she can take and we are making great gains in that direction this country and i would like to see other nations make great gains i would like to see a enlightened program of family planning available to all the peoples of the world i would like to see the problem of food production faced up to and nations take the necessary steps to try to provide the food that they're going to need to support their populations i would like to see the miracles of

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i would like to see the miracles of health extended to all the peoples of the world as they were to the fellow that was operated on with the heart change the other day and i know that the mortality infant mortality rate that's going down well i should like to see it reflected in all the 110 nations in short i believe that the our ancient enemies are ignorance and illiteracy are disease and bigotry and i would like to see my uh descendants grow up in a world that's as educated as possible as healthy as science will permit that's prepared to feed itself and certainly has a sufficient conservation forces to permit enjoyable uh leisure uh for the people who work long and late and i think that we're moving to that end mr president what do your experts tell you what is your best estimate on the performance of the economy over the next few months considering that you did not get the tax increase that you once called absolutely essential to a healthy economy it's very hard to predict what's ahead the secretary of treasury and the council economic advisors and budget director have made the best statements that they could to the ways and means committee we think the business activity is going to pick up we think there's going to be increased production we think it's very essential that we have a tax bill we look forward to continued prosperity we have had 82 months of unparalleled

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82 months of unparalleled prosperity in this country longer than any other period uninterrupted and we want to keep things that way we think the most important thing to us from a domestic standpoint is to provide more jobs and we've added six million jobs in the last few years we think that those jobs ought to have good pay but that we shouldn't increase our wages over our our profits our our dividends beyond what the increased productivity justifies so that we can maintain some restraint on prices and while we not satisfied with the job we've done we've done a better job than any other country and we are urging both business and labor to take that into consideration in their negotiations with each other mr president what about china many people as they peer off into the midst of the future see our future problem with china if you could sit down with the rulers of china what would you tell them about american intentions toward them i have said to them in several public statements that we hope that they can conduct themselves in such a way as will permit them to join the family of nations and that we can learn to live in harmony with each other we have no desire to be enemies of any nation in the world we believe that it is possible over the years for them to uh develop a better understanding of the world in which they live we think there's some very important things taking place right in china today

00:52:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUZrUhHy-ro&t=3120s)

things taking place right in china today that will contribute to we hope a better understanding and a more moderate approach to their neighbors in the world we have observed their failures in africa and in latin america and in southeast asia where they have undertaken aggressive steps that have resulted in failure for them and we hope they will profit by these experiences and we believe they will we don't know all that we'd like to know about what's going on in china we don't have a it's a rather close society and we don't have all the information that we'd like to have but we're hopeful and we believe that over a period of time that the opportunity exists for them to gain a better understanding of the other peoples of the world and thus be able to live more harmoniously with them mr president there was quite a dustup in this town recently perhaps more here than elsewhere about the resignation of secretary mcnamara is there anything more you can tell us about it no i can only repeat what secretary mcnamara said and what i have said secretary mcnamara has been secretary of defense longer than any other man i think he's been the best secretary of defense that we've ever had i hate to see him leave as secretary of defense i take great satisfaction and the contribution that mr mcnamara has made to the government and he's only on sabbatical leave he's not going to be very far away from here and on anything that is remotely connected with the

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connected with the best interest of the world that the world banks interested in we will be working very close together and i do not consider that i have lost his services or the world has lost his talents or i have lost a friend in any way i think that instead of building a great machine at the pentagon for the purpose of defending liberty and freedom that he will be busy at the world bank in the constructive purpose of building the economies and bettering humanity in these very nations that we are trying to defend and i look forward with a great deal of pleasure to working very closely with him mr president uh looking ahead to next year this will be the final year of this term of your presidency what are your priorities particularly in regards to congress can you get through do you feel any more your great society program any more welfare programs we will have uh detailed recommendations in our state of the union in connection with the problems the nation faces there are many unresolved problems there will be substantial recommendations to the next congress and there have been substantial achievements in this one we uh we didn't get everything we wanted at all we never have but we had a good congress we didn't have as good of congress as we had in the 89th congress we didn't we didn't pass as many substantive measures and they didn't reach as far as the others they were curtailed some because that was the mood of the congress and on a good many measures they were able to reduce

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reduce our proposals they didn't destroy model cities uh they crippled it they cut it by several hundred million they didn't destroy a rent supplement but they cut it from 40 million to 10 million they didn't destroy the rat bill they knocked it out for a while and staggered it but after the senate uh worked on we improved it they did not uh recommit a good many of the bills but they they reduced they did not to wipe out poverty but they reduced it from 2 billion to to several hundred million to a billion seven something so [Music] those are things that you have to face up to i'm not saying ugly things about the individual those men think they're right they don't want to take some of these new programs they don't want to fund model cities or rent supplements or face up to the urban requirements and what i think a 20th century requirement and i understand their philosophy i've understood it 35 years uh they frequently are the preservers of stagnation and they want to they want to keep things as they are and they don't not very they don't want to move forward now i came into the executive branch with a man who said let's get the country moving again now we have the country moving again and we want to keep it moving and we're going to keep it moving if we can get the congress's support and uh while we didn't get them supporters every time we wanted to we did move forward and we hope uh the next session will be a productive one too and i'm going to appeal to every republican an election year to come in and do what is best for his country and if he does that without regard to

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and if he does that without regard to how it might the president without regard to the politics of the year uh then i think we'll have a good congress uh i am going to do what i think is best for my country at home and abroad without regard to what effect it has on my future and if they'll do the same thing we'll have a good government and a good country and then we can let the election take care of itself and i think we'll have a good election thank you you

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